

I yield the floor, and I thank the Presiding Officer for his patience.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:25 p.m. recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. COATS).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 3:15 p.m. will be controlled by Senator HOEVEN or his designee.

The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to be able to engage in a colloquy until 3:15 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, along with Senator JOE MANCHIN—and actually a total of 60 sponsors—I have filed S. 1, which is the Keystone approval bill. It is a very simple, straightforward bill. This is legislation we have seen before in this body. What it does, under the commerce clause of the Constitution, is authorize Congress to approve the Keystone XL Pipeline project.

I have this map in the Chamber to show you the project. It runs from Hardisty in Alberta, Canada, all the way down to our refineries in Texas along the gulf coast.

This project will move 830,000 barrels of oil a day. Some of that will be oil from Canada. Some of that will be domestic oil from the Bakken region in Montana and North Dakota.

This is part of building the infrastructure so we can build a comprehensive energy plan for our country. We are producing more and more oil and gas in our country from shale from places such as the Bakken in North Dakota and Montana, the Eagle Ford in Texas, natural gas from places such as the Barnett and the Marcellus in New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio.

What we are working toward is—some people refer to it as energy independence, but really energy security for our country.

What does that mean? It means we produce more energy than we consume. Obviously, energy has a global market. The market for energy is a global market. We know that. The market for oil and gas is a global market.

But the point is, working together with our closest friend and ally, Canada, we can have North American energy security where we produce more energy than we consume.

Why is that important? That is important because it is about creating jobs. It is important because it is about economic growth. It is important because it is a national security issue.

Why do we continue to rely on oil from the Middle East? Why are we con-

tinuing to send dollars to the Middle East where you have—look at what happened in Paris today with an attack by Islamic extremists. One of the ways we fight back, one of the ways we push back is we take control of our own energy destiny. We can do it. We are doing it. Why are gas prices lower today at the pump? Is it because OPEC decided to give us a Christmas present? I do not think so. It is because we are producing far more energy than we ever have before. But to continue to produce that energy, we have to have the infrastructure to move that energy from where it is produced to where it is consumed. That means pipelines. That means roads. That means rail. For electricity, that means transmission. But we cannot have an energy plan for this country that really works without the infrastructure to move that energy safely and effectively. That is what this project is all about.

So why are we here talking about it today? It seems like a pretty straightforward proposition. After all, I think there are something like 19 different pipelines that cross the border. In fact, there are millions of miles of pipelines in this country. Here is a map I have in the Chamber of just some of them. We have millions of miles of pipeline in this country. A lot of them, as you can see, cross the border.

So why are we standing here today talking about another pipeline project? Because for the past 6 years—for the past 6 years—the administration has held this project up. They keep saying: There is a process. As a matter of fact, Josh Earnest, just yesterday, said: Oh, we have a process. Congress should not intervene in the Keystone XL Pipeline approval issue because there is a process. Really, Mr. President, there is a process? Let's see. The TransCanada company filed application to build the Keystone XL Pipeline in September of 2008—September 2008. If you do the math, that is more than 6 years ago. And there is a process somehow to get to a conclusion?

So that company, which has invested hundreds of millions already, wants to build, ultimately, an \$8.9 billion project that will move 830,000 barrels of oil a day. And here they are 6 years later still waiting for approval. That is why today we are asking Congress to step forward and do what the American people want.

Keystone is not a new issue. The American people understand this issue. Poll after poll shows the American people, by a margin of about 70 percent to 20-some percent, support this project. Whom do we work for? We work for the people of this great country, and 70 percent of the people of this great country say: Approve the project. After 6 long years, where all of the requirements have been met, approve the project.

But the President, of course, continues to hold it up, and even yesterday issued a veto threat. Why? Why is he wanting to threaten a veto on a

project that 70 percent of the American people support? It is really hard to understand, isn't it? Because every time an objection comes up, we have worked to address that objection.

When there was an objection on the route, the company rerouted. So the President says: Well, it is an environmental concern. He says: Well, it is an environmental concern. Really? An environmental concern?

This is what his own study found. After 6 years of study, the State Department, in multiple environmental impact statements—three draft statements and two final environmental impact statements—this is what they found: no significant environmental impact, according to the U.S. State Department environmental impact statements.

That is not something I did. That is not something the company did. That is something the Obama administration did—repeatedly—and came to the same conclusion: no significant environmental impact. In fact, if you do not build the pipeline, you have to move that oil with 1,400 railcars a day.

Now, Canada is going to produce the energy. North Dakota, Montana, other States, are going to continue to produce the energy. So that energy is going to move. The question is, how and where? If we cannot build the pipeline, then it has to go by railcar. So do we really want 1,400 railcars a day moving that product around or do we want it to move more safely, more cost-effectively, with better environmental stewardship through a pipeline? Common sense.

Then there is this idea somehow: Well, Canada is not going to produce that oil if they do not have a pipeline. Wrong. They will move it by rail, and they will build other pipelines. Here are several that are already in the planning stages, as shown on this map. They will move it to the East Coast to refineries they have there or they will send it west and it will go to China.

Now, does that make sense? It does not make sense to the American public, which is why the American public wants to work with Canada as well as produce energy in our country to become energy secure. The idea that we would say no to our closest friend and ally, Canada: We are not going to work with you, we are going to continue to buy oil from the Middle East, and we are going to have you send your oil to China, makes no sense to the American people. And it should not. It should not. That is why they overwhelmingly support this project.

So here we are. We are starting the new Congress. I think, very clearly, in the last election, the people said: We support this project. You saw it time after time with candidate after candidate who supported this project who won their election. But on an even bigger issue, an even bigger message, the people of this great country said: We want the Congress to work together in a bipartisan way to get things done. We